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Conte Mails Constituents Questionnaire on Vietnam

U.S. Rep. Silvio D. Conte (R) of Pittsfield said today he expects a detailed questionnaire to be sent to more than 40,000 persons in the First Congressional District to provide him with valuable insights to the attitude of his constituents toward present U.S. policy in Vietnam.

"Because Vietnam is unquestionably among the most important issues presently facing the United States," Conte said, "it is most important for me to have as clear a consensus from my constituents as possible."

He recalled that in his 1966 questionnaire, he had included several questions on Vietnam.

"The response was somewhat inconclusive," he said, "because of the great number (roughly 30 per cent) of those who responded with 'no opinion' on many of

the Vietnam questions. Although there were more affirmative answers (44.7 per cent) than negative (25.8 per cent) on the question of continued U.S. bombing of North Vietnam, there were 29.5 per cent who registered no opinion."

Conte said he had devoted all of his present questionnaire to Vietnam and to related issues such as non-military spending and CIA's role in giving financial support to educational institutions.

"I visited Vietnam in November," Conte said, "in connection with an overall fact-finding tour of Southeast Asia. I reported on what I saw in considerable detail to my constituents. I believe it is more true now than ever that Vietnam has become a dominant overriding issue, and it is very important to know what the

folks back home are thinking." Conte said he would compile a special report on the results of the questionnaire as soon as they were complete and would send it to the President. He said he has encouraged all constituents of the First District who did not receive a questionnaire but who would like to respond to write him in Washington (Room 257 Cannon Building, House of Representatives) and he will send them a copy immediately.